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WARRANT COMMITTEE MINUTES
JUNE 1, 2009, 6:30 P.M., CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL,
COMMUNITY ROOM

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- **Attendees:** Chair Curtis, Members Brusch, Rittenburg, Lynch, Widmer, Allison, McLaughlin, Heigham, Hofmann, Millane, Libenson, and Smith

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- **Absent:** Members Leclerc, Callanan, Paolillo, and Epstein

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- **Other:** Capital Budget Committee Members Jenny Fallon, Mark Clark, and Anne Marie Mahoney. Treasurer Carman and Accountant Hagg

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- **Handout:** 11 years of free cash history and voted spending thereof

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- Meeting was called to order by Chair Curtis at 6:40 p.m. after the Capital Budget Committee finished their voting on the special town meeting articles. The Capital Budget Committee remained for the discussion.

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- The purpose of the Warrant Committee meeting was to address a motion by TM member Anne Mahon to increase the school operating budget by \$174K for the purpose of maintaining two HS teaching positions and to keep the elementary school libraries open.

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- Chair Curtis reviewed the projected balance for free cash going into the new year. After the Annual and Special Town Meeting votes there will be a remaining balance of \$1.25M remaining. After the 7/1/09 certification this figure will be updated. Chair Curtis stated that if additional money from free cash is used to increase the operating budget this builds the cliff higher and cuts the safety net. The state aid figures for FY10 still have not been voted upon and the federal stimulus money will not be available for FY11.

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- Member Hofmann made a motion to oppose the motion by TM Member Mahon.

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- Member Libenson made the argument that libraries in the school should be considered a core service. Member Lynch argued that libraries are now operating without librarians and books are now in classrooms.

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- Member Brusch stated that Moody's is concerned about our continued use of free cash for operating budgets.

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- Member Millane asked what happens if Moody's lowers the bond rating – what is the difference in spread. Treasurer Carman stated that this presents two problems, the first is that bond buyers are standing in line for AAA rated bonds but not for the lower rated bonds, plus the spread is 15-20 basis points.

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- At 7:12 p.m. the School Committee joined the meeting. Chair Rittenburg gave an outline of the School Committee vote (in a separate chamber). Member Becky Vose made a motion to approve the “Mahon motion” to that was to be made at Town Meeting to increase the school budget by \$174K to maintain two High School teachers and to maintain staffing in the elementary school libraries. The vote was two in favor and three opposed. A question was then proposed to School Chair Rittenburg by a WC member as to whether the School Committee would use that money. Yes was the response. Rittenburg added that the School Committee has NOT said that they are closing elementary school libraries.

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- Again, Member Hofmann motion - 11 voted to oppose the “Mahon motion” to increase the School budget.

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- 7:17 p.m. Member Heigham made a motion to adjourn.